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(54) Plinth for kitchen units

(57) A plinth assembly for fitted kitchen furniture comprises a plurality of elongated panel members and a plurality of corner pieces, each corner piece being of constant cross-section throughout its length and having a central body portion and locating members projecting from the body portion in two directions for engagement with the ends of the panel members to locate the panels members in angular positions relative to one another, and the corner pieces being reversible so that they may be used to form an inside or an outside corner while preserving a visually attractive external appearance.

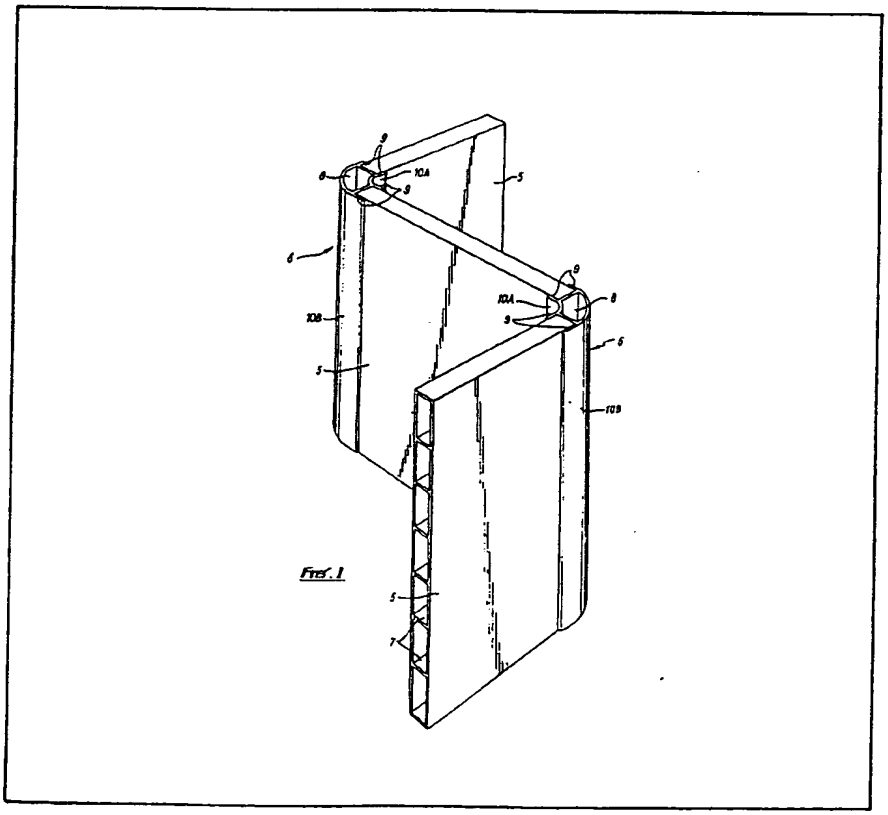

FIG. 1

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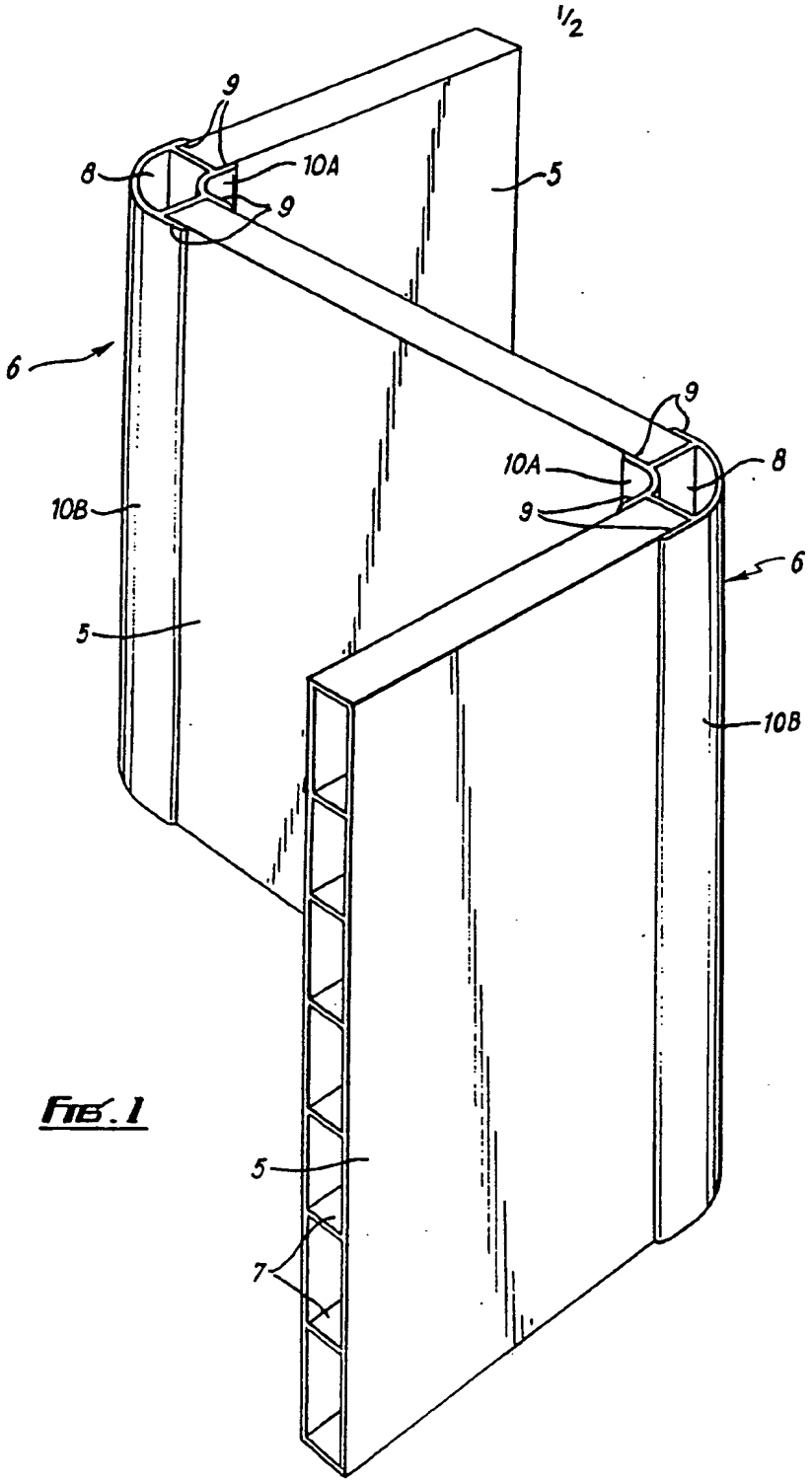
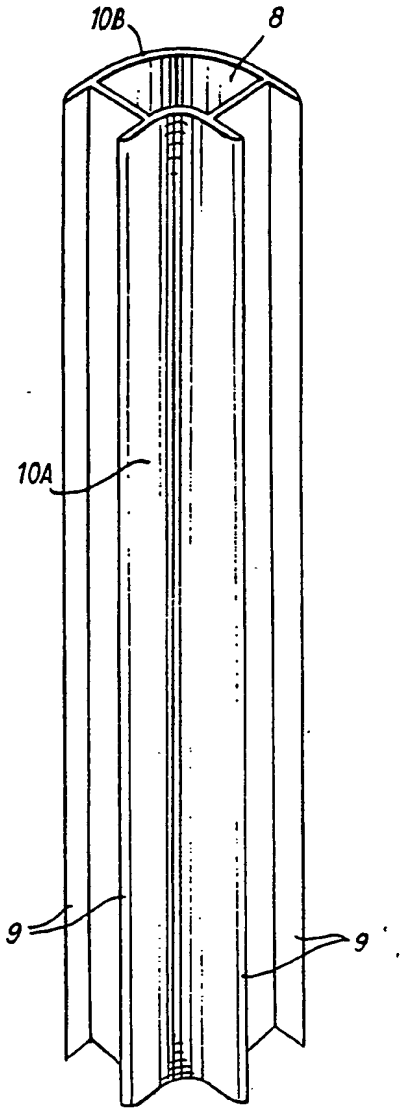



FIG. 1

Фиг.2

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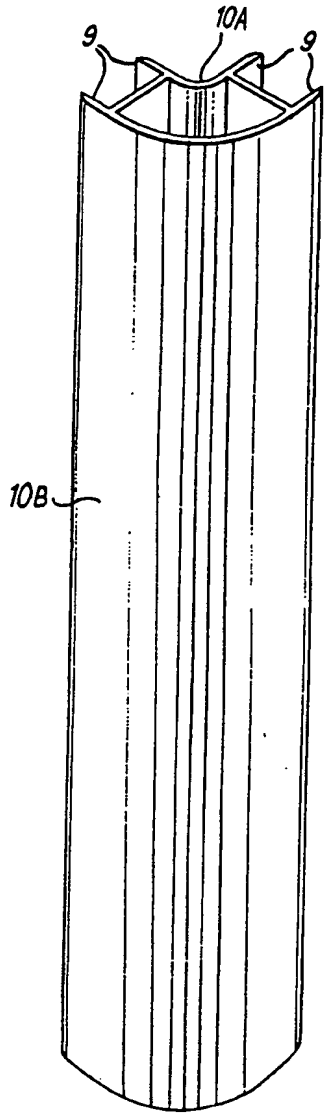

SPECIFICATION

**Plinth assemblies for furniture**

This invention relates to plinth assemblies for furniture and especially for fitted kitchen furniture.

Kitchen cupboard units are generally provided with a recessed portion at the foot of the unit which enables the user to stand closer to the unit and prevents damage to the doors and the like due to contact with the user's feet. A "kicker plate" or "plinth" is provided at the recessed portion and hitherto these have generally been formed of wood or board and attached to the units by screwing or the like.

It has recently become the practice to support such kitchen units on short legs or feet to which the plinth is secured by suitable clips. However where a unit is to form a pedestal or end unit it is necessary to provide a plinth on two or more adjacent sides and this presents problems since the end of one of the plinth plates or panels is exposed either at the front or side of the unit. Resort has therefore been had to the provision of end caps to obscure the exposed end and provide an attractive appearance.

It is an object of the present invention to provide an improved plinth construction and particularly one in which the panel members forming the plinth may be interconnected to form "inside" or "outside" corners utilising a minimum of relatively simple components. The term "inside corner" is used herein to refer to an arrangement in which, viewed from the front of the unit, the plinth panels forming the corner extend towards the viewer and the term "outside corner" is used to refer to the case in which, viewed from the front of the unit, the plinth panels forming the corner extend away from the viewer. It is often necessary to arrange for a number of inside and outside corners to be formed in a plinth construction dependant on the manner in which the kitchen units concerned are arranged relative to one another and to their surroundings.

The invention provides a corner piece for interconnecting panel members in predetermined angular positions relative to one another, the corner piece comprising an elongated member of constant cross-section throughout its length and having a central body portion and locating members projecting in two directions from the body portion, the body portion being so formed that the corner piece may be reversed to form either an inside or an outside corner while retaining a visually attractive external appearance.

The invention also provides a plinth assembly comprising a plurality of elongated panel members and a plurality of corner pieces, each corner piece being of constant cross-section throughout its length and having a central body portion and locating members projecting from the body portion in two directions for engagement with the ends of the panel members to locate the panel members in angular positions relative to one another, and the corner pieces being reversible so that they may be used to form an inside or an outside corner while preserving a visually attractive external appearance.

Both the panel members and the corner pieces may advantageously be formed from plastics material by extrusion.

The locating means on the corner pieces may take various forms. For example where the panels are of extruded plastics form the locating means may be arranged to engage in the open ends of the panel members and may be provided with clips engaging in holes in the panel members or with barbed members engaging with complementary barbed portions at the ends of the panel members. However in most cases for purposes of simplicity it is sufficient to utilise locating means in the form of projecting flanges which engage over the ends of the associated panel members to form a friction fit.

An embodiment of the invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying diagrammatic drawings, in which:—

Fig. 1 is a fragmentary perspective view of a plinth assembly for an article of kitchen furniture incorporating an inside and an outside corner;

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of a corner connector from one side; and

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of the corner connector of Fig. 2 from the opposite side.

Referring to Fig. 1, there is shown a plinth assembly comprising, by way of example, three panel members 5 of hollow extruded plastics construction interconnected at right angles to one another to form one inside and one outside corner by means of corner pieces 6. The panels are of hollow form provided with internal reinforcing webs 7. In Fig. 1 the right hand corner is an "outside corner" when viewed from the right, the panel members 5 extending away from the viewer from the corner, and the left hand corner is an "inside corner" when viewed from the right, the panel members 5 extending towards the viewer from the corner.

The corner piece 6 comprises a central hollow body portion 8 at opposite ends of which are pairs of outwardly directed flanges 9 which are spaced apart by a distance equal to the width of the associated panels so as to form a push fit engagement therewith. The body portion 8 has inner and outer curved finished surfaces 10A and 10B and the component is of uniform cross-section throughout its length and formed by cutting suitable lengths from a continuous extrusion.

The construction of the corner piece is such that it may be utilised in either of two positions to form inside or outside corners. At the right of Fig. 1 the corner piece is illustrated as forming an outside corner with the finished surface 10B of the body potion 8 directed outwardly so that this surface and the outer flanges 9 are exposed and impart an attractive appearance to the corner joint. At the left of Fig. 1 the corner piece is shown in its reversed position in which it is utilised to form an inside corner. In this case the inner finished surface 10A and the associ-

ated flanges 9 are visible to the viewer and again form an attractive corner joint.

Thus the arrangement described enables inside and outside corners to be formed using the same corner piece in different positions, thereby avoiding the necessity of producing separate components for each type of corner construction and hence reducing cost and complication. Moreover the corner pieces are of extremely simple construction and since they are formed by cutting suitable lengths from a continuous extrusion they can be produced simply and cheaply.

It should be appreciated that in Fig. 1 the panels are shown in diagrammatic form only and no means of attaching the panels to the associated unit of furniture is illustrated. Any suitable means of attachment may be provided and where the panels are of extruded construction the attachment means may advantageously be formed integrally with the panels during extrusion.

In some instances it may be desirable to join panels end to end in line rather than at right angles to one another and for this purpose a connecting member may be provided which incorporates oppositely directed channels or sockets similar to those which project from the body portion of the corner piece 6. In this way long plinth sections can be formed by connecting panels end to end.

Various modifications may be made without departing from the invention. For example the connecting pieces may be engaged with the panels in many different ways and could be provided with retaining means to hold them in engagement. Where the panels are of hollow construction the connecting pieces may be provided with projections which engage in the hollow ends of the panels and these projections may incorporate retaining means in the form of protruding detents which engage in holes in the side walls of the panels. Alternatively external teeth or barbs may be formed on projecting portions of the connecting pieces for engagement with internal teeth or barbs at the ends of the panels. In a further modification the connecting pieces and panels may be secured together by adhesive.

CLAIMS

1. A corner piece for interconnecting panel members in predetermined angular positions relative to one another, the corner piece comprising an elongated member of constant cross-section throughout its length and having a central body portion and locating members projecting in two directions from the body portion, the body portion being so formed that the corner piece may be reversed to form either an inside or an outside corner while retaining a visually attractive external appearance.

2. A corner piece according to claim 1 wherein said locating means comprise projecting flanges adapted to engage over the ends of the associated panel members to form a friction fit.

3. A corner piece according to claim 1 wherein said locating means comprise projections adapted to engage within openings in the ends of the associated panel members.

4. A corner piece according to claim 2 or 3 wherein said locating means incorporate retaining means for engagement with complementary retaining means at the ends of the associated panel members.

5. A corner piece according to any preceding claim which is formed from plastics material by extrusion.

6. A corner piece according to any preceding claim wherein said body portion is hollow and the surfaces thereof which form said inner and outer corners are curved in a direction transverse to the length of the corner piece.

7. A corner piece for interconnecting panel members in predetermined angular positions relative to one another substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to Figs. 2 and 3 of the accompanying drawings.

8. A plinth assembly comprising a plurality of elongated panel members and a plurality of corner pieces, each corner piece being of constant cross-section throughout its length and having a central body portion and locating members projecting from the body portion in two directions for engagement with the ends of the panel members to locate the panel members in angular positions relative to one another, and the corner pieces being reversible so that they may be used to form an inside or an outside corner while preserving a visually attractive external appearance.

9. A plinth assembly incorporating corner pieces according to any of claims 1 to 7.

10. A plinth assembly according to claim 8 or 9 wherein said panels are of hollow construction and are formed from plastics material by extrusion.

11. A plinth assembly substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to Fig. 1 of the accompanying drawings.

12. Any novel subject matter or combination including novel subject matter herein disclosed, whether or not within the scope of or relating to the same invention as any of the preceding claims.

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